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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/980,203	01/18/2002	Hirohiko Hanada	0425-0865P	9521
2292	7590	01/14/2004		
BIRCH STEWART KOLASCH & BIRCH PO BOX 747 FALLS CHURCH, VA 22040-0747			EXAMINER HARDEE, JOHN R	
			ART UNIT 1751	PAPER NUMBER

DATE MAILED: 01/14/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/980,203 Examiner John R. Hardee	HANADA ET AL. Art Unit 1751

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____.
 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-7 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) 5 is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1-4, 6 and 7 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
 * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
 13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application) since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.
 a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
 14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121 since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.
 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____. 6) Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.
2. Claims 1-4, 6 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over EP 118,191 A1. The reference discloses laundry additive products in the form of a flexible sheet substrate in combination with a detergent composition (abstract). The detergent is a solidified liquid mass in which are dispersed solid particles of less than 150 microns, preferably less than 100 microns and ideally less than 50 microns (p. 21, lines 30-32). Suitable particulates are disclosed at p. 7, lines 11+. Addition of a surfactant is exemplified. These particles preferably comprise 25-45% of the weight of the compositions (p. 22, lines 24-26). All of the disclosed materials appear to be soluble enough to meet the solubility limitations of claim 2. Alternatively, it would be obvious to choose materials which do meet these limitations, because any and all of these materials are disclosed as suitable. The compositions are slurry coated onto an insoluble substrate (see examples) and are solidified at ambient temperature, so they are pasty at some point. This material meets the limitations of a soluble substrate, even though it is coated onto an insoluble substrate. This reference differs from the claimed subject matter in that it does not disclose a composition which reads on applicant's claims with sufficient specificity to constitute anticipation.

It would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to make such a composition, because this reference teaches that all of the ingredients recited by

applicants are suitable for inclusion in a sheet-like surfactant composition. The person of ordinary skill in the surfactant art would expect the recited compositions to have properties similar to those compositions which are exemplified, absent a showing to the contrary. Regarding the particle size limitations, a reference is relied upon for all that it fairly discloses. The teachings of the reference are not confined to the most preferred embodiments.

Applicant is reminded that an invention defined by a product-by-process claim is a product. MPEP 806.05(f), *In re Bridgeford*, 149 USPQ 55. Burden is on the applicant to show product differences in product by process claims. *In re Thorpe*, 227 USPQ 964 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Best*, 195 USPQ 430 (CCPA 1977); *In re Fessman*, 180 USPQ 324 (CCPA 1974); *In re Brown*, 173 USPQ 685 (CCPA 1972).

In the case where the claimed ranges overlap or lie inside ranges disclosed by the prior art, a *prima facie* case of obviousness exists. *In re Wertheim*, 541 F.2d 257, 191 USPQ 90 (CCPA 1976); *In re Woodruff*, 919 F.2d 1575, 16 USPQ2d 1934 (Fed Cir. 1990).

3. Claims 1-4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 10-072593 (abstract). The abstract discloses sheet-like products for washing. A water-soluble substrate, preferably comprising polyvinyl alcohol. A bleaching agent such as sodium carbonate hydrogen (?) peroxide (sodium percarbonate) is preferred, and this material meets the limitations of a soluble inorganic material, as well as applicant's particle size limitation, as an average particle size of 150-1200 microns is taught. The water soluble outer sheets are disclosed as being stuck to the sides of the central

soluble substrate, implying a pasty consistency at some point. This reference differs from the claimed subject matter in that it does not disclose a composition which reads on applicant's claims with sufficient specificity to constitute anticipation.

It would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to make such a composition, because this reference teaches that all of the ingredients recited by applicants are suitable for inclusion in a sheet-like surfactant composition. The person of ordinary skill in the surfactant art would expect the recited compositions to have properties similar to those compositions which are exemplified, absent a showing to the contrary.

Applicant is reminded that an invention defined by a product-by-process claim is a product. MPEP 806.05(f), *In re Bridgeford*, 149 USPQ 55. Burden is on the applicant to show product differences in product by process claims. *In re Thorpe*, 227 USPQ 964 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Best*, 195 USPQ 430 (CCPA 1977); *In re Fessman*, 180 USPQ 324 (CCPA 1974); *In re Brown*, 173 USPQ 685 (CCPA 1972).

Allowable Subject Matter

4. Claim 5 is allowed.
5. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: The closest prior art of record is the references relied upon above. Claim 5 is a process claim, and the product-by-process language therein must be given weight. As the references do not disclose or motivate the spray drying step recited in this claim, it is allowable over the prior art of record.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Response to Arguments

6. Applicant's arguments filed December 1, 2003 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant argues that the references do not disclose the spray drying of a slurry which coats the substrate. With regard to the composition claims, this is not persuasive because such product-by-process language need not be afforded patentable weight unless applicant can demonstrate convincing evidence of unexpected results. Attorney arguments cannot take the place of evidence. With regard to process claim 5 however, this argument is persuasive, and the previous grounds of rejection have been withdrawn.

7. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of

the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to the examiner, Dr. John R. Hardee, whose telephone number is (571) 272-1318. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday from 8:00 until 4:30. In the event that the examiner is not available, his supervisor, Dr. Yogendra Gupta, may be reached at (571) 272-1316.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0661.



John R. Hardee
Primary Examiner
January 5, 2004